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BOOK REVIEWS

The Colonizing Activities of the English Puritans. The Last Phase of the Elizabethan Struggle with Spain. By Arthur Percival Newton. With an Introduction by Charles M. Andrews, Ph.D., L.H.D. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1914. Pp. x+344.

In his introduction to this important work, Prof. Andrews tells us that the first forty years of the seventeenth century in England, although primarily of interest as a period of constitutional conflict, were marked by an outburst of romantic activity which sent hundreds of Englishmen out into the western seas in search of adventure and profit. The entire colonial activity, together with the half piratical expeditions and organized commercial enterprises, cannot be fully understood unless the impulses which fashioned them, partly religious and partly economic, be viewed in their entirety. It is difficult, he says, to grasp the full significance of the settlements of Virginia, Maryland, Massachusetts and Saybrook, without a knowledge of the circumstances under which the colonies of Bermuda, the Barbadoes, and Old Providence were established, for while no single motive governed the men who voyaged to the new world during this romantic period, these different impulses were so inextricably interwoven that the movement must be viewed as a whole. Our American historians, up to within very recent times, have been handling individual efforts of colonization as separate movements, "thus giving to our era of beginnings the appearance of a running track laid out in separate and mutually exclusive courses." It is hard to say whether it is more advisable to study the European backgrounds of our American history or to view the history of the old world through the focus of early American endeavor; but for a satisfactory appreciation of the settlements on the American seaboard, the colonizing activities of the different religious elements in England must be thoroughly understood. This is the great value of Mr. Newton's book. Though he deals with the colonizing experiments of the English Puritans in the West Indies and the States of Central America, he ranges over a large field of

English activity during those intense years of royal and parliamentary conflict from 1600 to 1660.

In the time of Elizabeth, the English Puritans had become a veritable religious clan, bound together by ties of blood, marriage and religious institutions; and in treating the Puritan colonizing activities, one is impressed by the fact that it is almost the same as dealing with a family. The Providence Company, which settled in the very heart of the Spanish Main, is the story of organized opposition on the part of these Englishmen of the seventeenth century to Spanish dominion in the West Indies; and in following the history of the company which undertook the colonization of the islands of Henrietta, Providence, and Tortuga or Association, in the Caribbean Sea, the impression is brought home upon the reader that the history of English colonization of the first part of the seventeenth century is peculiarly a part of the history of England itself and that it can only be understood in so far forth as the causes are detected in the background of English political history, enlivened with the highlights of the forces which were tending for and against the power of the royal Stuarts. The story of the Providence Company falls naturally into two periods, from its foundation, in 1626, down to the year 1635, and from 1635 down to the beginning of the reign of Charles II, 1660. Mr. Newton builds up a very interesting story from the contemporary records of the times and from the *Calendars*, both *Domestic* and *Colonial*, of the Public Record Office. The history of Puritan immigration, the planting of Tortuga and the settlement of Providence, with their failure to hold their own against Spanish and French attacks, pass before the eyes of the reader with all the interest of a romance; and its impression—no matter what we think of the morality of the piracy which assisted England so greatly in her colonizing enterprises—makes it impossible not to be thrilled by the story of these sturdy Puritans who were instrumental in building up the first permanent settlements on our coast. The close relationship which existed between their leaders in England, in the American colonies and in these tiny island settlements of the West Indies is here explained for the first time. It is a work which should be found in every American library, for no other book on the subject illustrates so clearly the development of the policy of English hostility to Spain during this period of its greatest vigor.